

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the specification as indicated below:

1. (currently amended) A monovalent cation containing well fluid comprising: an aqueous monovalent brine system ~~brine containing at least 0.6 equivalents per liter of a water soluble monovalent cation salt and which is substantially free of divalent cation salt~~; and an amount of a starch derivative selected such that the well fluid has the following characteristics: (a) a low shear rate viscosity greater than about 5,000 centipoise; (b) a high shear rate viscosity at 511 sec⁻¹ in the range from about 15 to about 70 centipoise measured at 120°F, wherein the aqueous monovalent brine system consists essentially of at least 0.6 equivalents per liter of a water soluble monovalent cation salt, wherein the anion of the salt is a halide, wherein the monovalent cation salt is substantially free of divalent cations, and wherein the well fluid is substantially free of xanthan gum.

2. (currently amended) The well fluid of claim 1, wherein the starch derivative comprises a pre-gelatinized crosslinked amylopectin starch which has been crosslinked to about 25% to about 60% of the maximum attainable viscosity ~~the extent that the viscosity of a basic aqueous amylopectin starch suspension undergoing crosslinking is within about 25% to less than about 50% of the maximum viscosity which can be obtained.~~

3. (original) The well fluid of claim 1, further comprising a particulate bridging agent which is substantially insoluble in the aqueous brine.

4. (currently amended) A method of treating a well that comprises: adding a well fluid comprising a monovalent aqueous brine system ~~containing at least 0.6 equivalents per liter of a water soluble monovalent cation salt and which has less than 0.6 equivalents of divalent cation salt~~; and an amount of a starch derivative selected such that the well fluid has the following characteristics: (a) a low shear rate viscosity greater than about 5,000 centipoise; (b) a high shear rate viscosity at 511 sec⁻¹ in the range from about 15 to about 70 centipoise measured at 120°F to the well; and causing the ~~monovalent aqueous brine~~ well fluid to travel through at least a portion

of the well, wherein the monovalent aqueous brine system consists essentially of at least 0.6 equivalents per liter of a water soluble monovalent cation salt, wherein the anion of the salt is a halide, wherein the monovalent cation salt is substantially free of divalent cations, and wherein the well fluid is substantially free of xanthan gum.

5. (original) The method of claim 4, wherein the fluid further comprises a particulate bridging agent which is substantially insoluble in the aqueous brine.

6. (currently amended) A monovalent cation containing well fluid comprising: an aqueous monovalent brine system containing at least 0.6 equivalents per liter of a water soluble monovalent cation salt and less than 0.6 equivalents per liter of a water soluble divalent cation salt; and a viscosifying agent including a starch derivative, wherein the starch derivative is a pre-gelatinized crosslinked amylopectin starch which has been crosslinked to about 25% to about 60% of the maximum attainable viscosity ~~the extent that the viscosity of a basic aqueous amylopectin starch suspension undergoing crosslinking is within about 25% to less than about 50% of the maximum viscosity which can be obtained,~~ wherein the aqueous monovalent brine system consists essentially of at least 0.6 equivalents per liter of a water soluble monovalent cation salt, wherein the anion of the salt is a halide, wherein the monovalent cation salt is substantially free of divalent cations, and wherein the well fluid is substantially free of xanthan gum.

7. (canceled)

8. (canceled)

9. (new) The monovalent cation containing well fluid of Claim 2, wherein the pre-gelatinized crosslinked amylopectin starch comprises less than 10 wt% amylase.

10. (new) The monovalent cation containing well fluid of Claim 6, wherein the pre-gelatinized crosslinked amylopectin starch comprises less than 10 wt% amylase.